In the Claims

Please amend claims 1, 2, 6 and 7 of the application as follows:

---

1. (Amended) A backing plate which is used for a sputtering apparatus for forming a thin film on a substrate, and to which a target is bonded, the backing plate comprising:

cooling means for feeding a cooling medium to the backing plate at a predetermined flow rate, the cooling means including at least one cooling medium flow passage, wherein at least one cooling medium flow passage includes at least one branch, and

A5

wherein there is substantially uniform temperature distribution in the target by virtue of:

(a) controlling the flow rate of the cooling medium;

(b) feeding the cooling medium to predetermined portions of the backing plate; and

(c) applying different sputtering powers to predetermined portions of the target, and

wherein the substantially uniform temperature distribution in the target results in formation of a thin film having a substantially uniform film thickness.

A5

2. (Amended) The backing plate of claim 1, wherein the predetermined portions of the backing plate to which the cooling medium is fed include at least a periphery of the backing plate.

6. (Amended) The backing plate of claim 5, wherein an inlet for at least one cooling medium flow passage is provided at a position in the backing plate corresponding to at least one of the four corner portions of the target.

A6

7. (Amended) A sputtering method for forming a thin film on a substrate using a target, the method comprising the steps of:

applying different sputtering powers to portions of the target; and

cooling the target via a cooling means that includes at least one cooling medium flow passage for feeding a cooling medium to the backing plate at a predetermined flow rate, wherein at least one cooling medium flow passage includes at least one branch, and

wherein the method is effective to ensure a substantially uniform temperature distribution by eliminating temperature unevenness in a surface of the target, the uniform temperature distribution enabling formation of a thin film having a substantially uniform film thickness.